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ABSTRACT

This training program handbook focuses on the presentation and practice of eight basic communication skills: attending, paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, summarizing, probing, counselor self-disclosure, interpreting, and confrontation. The skills are presented in 10 sessions, one for each of the eight skills and two integrating sessions. The eight skill building sessions follow the same basic pattern: (1) an exercise illustrating one or more aspects of the skill; (2) a description of the skill as it is used in training; (3) a demonstration of each skill poorly and competently applied; (4) skill practice in small groups; and (5) a discussion of this skill in counseling clients with alcohol-related problems. (Author/JLL)

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Counseling Alcoholic Clients

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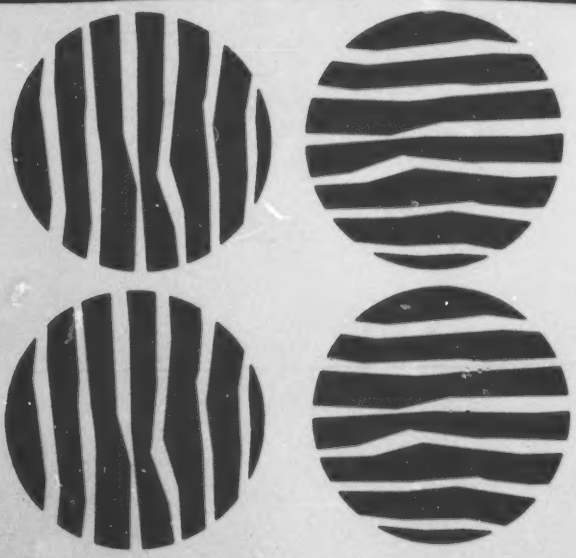

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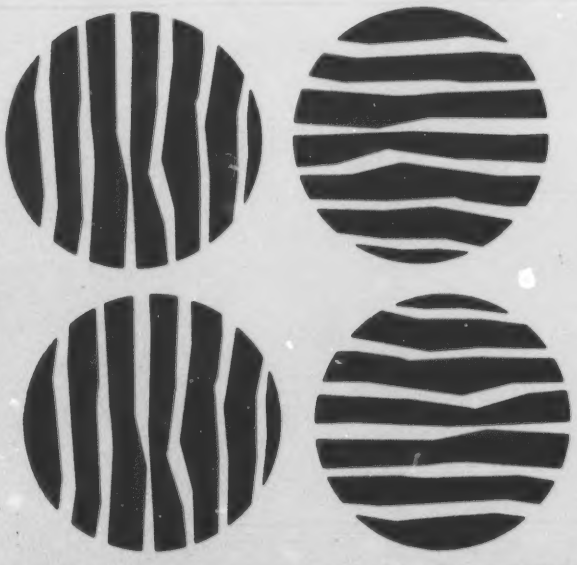

Participant Handbook

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COUNSELING ALCOHOLIC CLIENTS
Basic Communication Skills

Participant Handbook

Developed by

The National Center for Alcohol Education

U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare • Public Health Service
Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
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PREFACE

Counseling Alcoholic Clients: Basic Communication Skills was developed by the National Center for Alcohol Education in conjunction with a team of practicing alcoholism counselors and trainers employed by the West Virginia Division on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. The West Virginia team specified the major activities and behaviors required of an alcoholism counselor in individual client treatment. These activities and behaviors were than verified by a sample of West Virginia counselors and supervisors as well as by a national panel of prominent alcoholism counselors and counselor educators. These two groups also identified the need for training in basic communication skills as critical to successful performance of a majority of the individual client treatment activities.

The West Virginia/NCAE team then selected eight essential basic communication skills to be included in the training program and formulated the instructional objectives for the course. NCAE staff drafted the Participant Handbook containing descriptions of the skills and the Trainer Manual, a step-by-step guide for the trainer to use in conducting the learning activities. Following revisions in both documents based on suggestions from the West Virginia team and three reviewers, the program was pilot tested in West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Maryland. The materials have been revised since the pilot test to reflect evaluation findings, site observations, and trainer and trainee comments.

Special acknowledgement is expressed here to the members of the West Virginia team, selected by Raymond E. Washington, Director, Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, for their contributions to the development and pilot testing of Counseling Alcoholic Clients: Basic Communication Skills:

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OVERVIEW OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Counseling Alcoholic Clients: Basic Communication Skills is designed to help practicing alcoholism counselors upgrade their abilities to use eight basic communication skills--attending, paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, summarizing, probing, counselor self-disclosure, interpreting, and confrontation--in one-to-one interaction with a client. On completion of the program, participants will be able to:

- define each skill;
- recognize when each skill is being practiced effectively; and
- demonstrate the ability to use each skill and to integrate all skills appropriately and effectively in a simulated counseling situation.

The eight skills as defined in this program are:

Attending. Demonstration of the counselor's concern for and interest in the client by eye contact, body posture, and accurate verbal following.

Paraphrasing. A counselor statement that mirrors the client's statement in exact or similar wording.

Reflection of Feeling. The essence of the client's feelings, either stated or implied, as expressed by the counselor.

Summarizing. A brief review of the main points discussed in the session to insure continuity in a focused direction.

Probing. A counselor's response that directs the client's attention inward to help both parties examine the client's situation in greater depth.

Counselor Self-Disclosure. The counselor's sharing of his/her personal feelings, attitudes, opinions, and experiences for the benefit of the client.

Interpreting. Presenting the client with alternative ways of looking at his/her situation.

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Confrontation. A counselor's statement or question intended to point out contradictions in the client's behavior and statements or to induce the client to face an issue the counselor feels the client is avoiding.

These skills can be classified under the broader headings of listening, processing, and feedback, three elements that comprise communication between two individuals. This program addresses communication from the counselor's perspective.

Listening is defined as receiving messages from a client by focusing attention on what the client is expressing, both verbally and nonverbally.

Processing is the complex series of events that take place within the counselor between his or her listening and responding to the client. Processing may include mentally cataloging data, categorizing, comparing, hypothesizing on significance, exploring implications, and selecting a response on the basis of the counselor's life experience, beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, feelings, self-acceptance, and other factors that influence judgment and performance.

Feedback is the verbal or nonverbal response that the counselor makes as a result of processing the information received from listening to the client.

Attending can be classified as a listening skill; the remaining seven can be classified as feedback, and as such, provide evidence of the quality of the listening and processing that precede the feedback. Processing skills are not covered explicitly in this course.

Paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and summarizing are primarily the feedback skills that demonstrate to the client that the counselor is paying attention to what the client is expressing verbally and nonverbally. The counselor can also use these skills to help the client recognize and clarify his/her own understanding of what he/she says and the feelings related to these messages. The counselor applies the other four skills--probing, counselor self-disclosure, interpreting, and confrontation--to promote a mutual identification and understanding of the client's problems and ways to deal with those problems.

These eight skills constitute only a partial listing of skills that can be subsumed under the heading of listening, processing, and feedback. Other dimensions of processing include the counselor's knowledge about alcohol and alcoholism; specific treatment techniques (behavior shaping, modeling, goal setting, assertiveness training, relaxation training); various theories of psychological development and human behavior (Maslow, Glasser); self-awareness of feelings, values, and attitudes; and past personal and professional experiences. Other feedback skills include advising, information giving, directing, supporting, and structuring.

Mastery of all the listening, processing, and feedback skills and others such as maintaining confidentiality, record keeping, crisis intervention, and referral are necessary for effective counseling. Mastery of all these skills depends on both training and experience and requires the same focused attention that is being given to the eight basic communication skills in this program.

The eight skills covered in this training program were selected not only because of their fundamental nature but also because they represent the core of communication skills necessary for the largest number of counselor activities in one-to-one client interaction. The major activities in one-to-one client interaction can be expressed in a variety of ways. In one such listing, the counselor:

1. Establishes and maintains a climate for counseling.

2. Interviews the client to gather case history information.

3. Provides safeguards for maintaining confidentiality and ethical standards.

4. Prepares and uses necessary client reports and records.

5. Seeks consultation on the client's case when needed.

6. Negotiates an individual treatment plan that is tailored to and acceptable to the client.

7. Plans strategies for intervening in the client's crisis situations outside the counseling setting.

8. Increases client understanding of the severity of the abuse by explaining the nature of alcoholism as an illness.

9. Informs and assists the client in establishing necessary contacts with community services.

10. Coordinates involvement of other resource persons in accordance with a mutually acceptable individual treatment plan for the client.

11. Increases the client's ability to recognize the possible need for counseling assistance in the future.

12. Prepares for and conducts after-care activities with the client.

13. Evaluates client progress and assists the client in doing the same so that individualized treatment plan goals can be redefined if necessary.

14. Given the client's expressed desire to discontinue participation in the treatment process, the counselor leads the client in a review of the accumulated gains of the treatment process.

By matching the eight skills and this list of activities, it is apparent that, regardless of what other skills may be required, attending, paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and summarizing are essential to "establishing and maintaining a climate for counseling," which is fundamental to and part of all the other activities. In addition, probing, counselor self-disclosure, interpreting, and confrontation are critical to Activities 2, 6, 11, 12, 13, and 14 and are called for in certain phases of Activities 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

Other important aspects of the counselor/client interaction include the qualities of genuineness, warmth, empathy, immediacy, congruence, concreteness, and respect. These are not skills, but rather are conditions which the counselor can create partially through the use of the basic communication skills. These conditions are not addressed directly in the training program but will be discussed where appropriate.

In summary, this training program focuses on the presentation and practice of eight basic communication skills. These are not the only skills a counselor uses in the counseling situation; however, they are essential in establishing a foundation of client self-awareness and mutual understanding between client and counselor. Their use in a counseling session or in communicating with colleagues, family, and others will help the counselor to:

- listen effectively to find out what the other person's situation or problem is;
- let the other person know that the counselor is really hearing and understanding him/her;
- check out with the other person that the counselor's perception of the situation or problem is accurate; and
- assist the other person in his or her perception and understanding of self, situation, and possibilities for change.

The eight skills are presented one at a time. The idea is to break down the task of communicating into smaller units or skills. Participants learn and practice the individual skills separately and then practice integrating them.

The skills are presented in ten sessions, one for each of the eight skills and two integrating sessions. The first integrating session comes after the sessions presenting the first four skills and provides an opportunity to practice the integration of those four skills. The second integrating session comes after practicing the other four skills

and provides the opportunity to practice the integration of all eight skills. The eight skill building sessions will follow the same basic pattern:

- an exercise illustrating one or more aspects of the skill;
- a description of the skill as it is used in this training program;
- a demonstration of each skill poorly and competently applied;
- skill practice in small groups; and
- a discussion of this skill in counseling clients with alcohol-related problems.

FEEDBACK AND ASSUMPTIONS

Feedback

Feedback was described in the Overview as the verbal or nonverbal response that the counselor makes as a result of processing the information received from listening to the client. With the exception of attending, the communication skills covered in this program are classified as feedback.

Feedback used in another sense is an important aspect of this training program. During skill practice sessions, participants will take turns as counselor, client, and observer. Client and observer will give the counselor feedback dealing with his or her performance of the skill in question.

The definition of feedback as used in the context of the practice sessions is: telling the counselor what you (as observer) heard and saw as he or she practiced a particular skill, or what you (as client) felt in response to his or her practice of the skill.

The extent to which you give each other feedback and the quality of the feedback may be the critical factor in determining whether or not this workshop will be productive for you. For example, if in practice sessions neither the observers nor the clients give you significant feedback about your performance as a counselor, you might complete your training, having gone through all the prescribed activities, and have gained nothing. You may perhaps even take away a more distorted rather than a clearer picture of your capabilities. In addition being a recipient of feedback can help sharpen your perception of what constitutes useful feedback.

When giving feedback, whether positive or negative, keep these guidelines in mind. They apply to both counseling and skill practice situations.

- The purpose of feedback is <u>to be helpful</u> to other people by giving them useful information about what they are doing or the effect they are having on you.

- <u>Timing</u> is important. If feedback is given so long after a happening that the recipient can't remember the happening clearly, it is not likely to be helpful. Feedback is most helpful when given as soon as possible.

- Be specific rather than general. Generalities often raise people's defenses so that they don't get the message you are trying to give. It's much easier to hear and acknowledge "I felt annoyed when you were late for our appointment today," than it is to hear and acknowledge "You're always late and I'm sick and tired of it." (Even if the other person is always late and you are sick and tired of it, it's more constructive to deal with specific situations as soon as possible, rather than not give feedback and sit on your feelings until you finally explode.)

- Being descriptive rather than judgmental is also less likely to raise people's defenses and is more helpful. "You just went through a stop light and you're driving at 40 mph in a 20 mph school zone, and I feel nervous," is more constructive than "You're really a lousy driver."

- The last point to remember about feedback is that it should be directed toward behavior, which is something the receiver can do something about. While you may find you simply have to tell someone the effect that his/her height, or age, or color of eyes has on you, this is not feedback. In effect, you're not telling that person anything about himself/herself but something about yourself. Even if it's positive, such as "Darling, I just love your green eyes," you're talking about your own likes or dislikes rather than something someone else has control over and could change if he/she wanted to.

Assumptions

Despite earnest intentions to give accurate and meaningful feedback, we may sometimes unconsciously erect barriers to doing so. These barriers may derive from our own needs, beliefs, prejudices, preferences, values, or fears, and they may frequently take the form of assumptions about others. Sometimes our assumptions are on target; quite often they are far from reality. However, they are accurate often enough to encourage us to keep making assumptions.

Making assumptions often takes the form of taking observable facts about another person, developing a theory to explain those facts, and then treating the other person as if your theory is proven. In alcoholism counseling, this process might mean observing that a client's eyes are bloodshot, assuming that he/she has been drinking, and reacting to the client with anger and disappointment on the basis of your assumptions. The client, however, may actually have hay fever or may not have been able to sleep. This kind of assuming is sometimes called pigeonholing or stereotyping.

Making assumptions can also take the form of making another person responsible for our feelings. For example, I may feel frightened; if I

assume that some other person is threatening to me, then this assumption justifies or rationalizes my fear. This process could easily take place with a client who may, in reality, be dangerous only to himself/herself or not dangerous at all.

Three things to remember about assumptions are:

- Recognize that you probably have some.
- Don't take them too seriously. You can't know another person's experience, only your own perceptions of that experience. Any conclusions or theories that you may have about another may be accurate or they may be only your assumptions.
- Check them out. Using nonjudgmental words and tentative phrases, share your assumptions with the recipient and see whether they are accurate or not--for example, "It seems like you may have been drinking today." Remember, the object in counseling another is not for the counselor to be right (and the client wrong) but rather to establish communication, build a relationship, and help the client develop the capacity to deal more effectively with his/her life.

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ATTENDING

Definition of Attending

Attending is fundamental to the use of all other counseling skills. As used here, attending implies a concern by the counselor with all aspects of the client's communication. It includes listening to the verbal content, hearing and observing the verbal and nonverbal cues to the feeling that accompany the communication, and then communicating back to the client the fact that the counselor is paying attention.

Purposes of Attending

1. It encourages the client to continue expressing his/her ideas and feelings freely.

2. It allows the client to explore ideas and feelings in his/her own way and thus provides the client with an opportunity to direct the session.

3. It can give the client a sense of responsibility for what happens in the session by enabling him/her to direct the session.

4. It helps the client relax and be comfortable in the counseling session.

5. It contributes to the client's trust of the counselor and sense of security.

6. It enables the counselor to draw more accurate inferences about the client.

Components of Attending

Effective attending has two components: (1) listening and observing and (2) communicating to the client that listening and observing is going on.

The first component of attending behavior is listening effectively and observing carefully. For many people, listening is a difficult task to learn. Although society does place great emphasis on spoken exchanges, many people have not learned to listen effectively. Often,

people may think they are listening when they are actually thinking about something else or are debating a subject in their head while waiting for the other person to pause so that they can present some comment of their own. A client can usually sense when the counselor is listening with "half an ear."

Effective listening by itself, however, is not enough. Counseling occurs in a face-to-face situation where both participants watch, as well as listen to, each other. The difference in information gathered from seeing and hearing as opposed to hearing alone is illustrated vividly by contrasting television with radio.

The counselor learns much about the feelings of the client through observation. Frequently, nonverbal behavior that expresses feelings may appear to alter or even negate verbal messages. It is common for people to communicate much more than they intend by their body language. As a matter of fact, the nonverbal message is more likely than the spoken words to transmit the real message--for example, a facial expression showing disgust may contradict the statement, "I'm not bothered by the thought of a drunken woman."

Conversely, many of the skills, attitudes, and feelings of the counselor are conveyed to the client through nonverbal behavior such as facial expressions, posture, eye contact, and gestures. The first component of attending occurs when the counselor stays attuned to what the client is expressing verbally and nonverbally. He/she listens closely and observes carefully.

The second component of attending behavior is letting the client know that he/she is really being heard. The counselor communicates his/her attentiveness to the client generally through three methods.

a. Eye contact--The counselor should initiate and maintain eye contact with the client. Strong impressions--favorable and unfavorable--are formed depending on the kind and amount of eye contact. In ordinary social interaction, it is considered courteous to look at the person with whom one is speaking. In counseling, this behavior is almost imperative. However, in some cases continuous eye contact might cause the client to feel uncomfortable, as could a fixed stare or an intense gaze. Varied use of eye contact is the most effective and natural behavior for the counselor and the most likely to put the client at ease.

   It is important to note that these comments on eye contact are not applicable to all cultures. For instance, maintaining direct eye contact is a hostile act to some Native Americans and may be taken as a lack of respect by some Orientals.

b. Posture--Body language reveals a great deal about people; posture and gestures convey distinct messages. Impressions

of others are formed even from the way they sit. The counselor wants to communicate to the client by his/her body posture that he/she is interested. An upright seated position with the upper body leaning slightly forward is generally considered to convey attentiveness, but the counselor should adopt a posture in which he/she will feel relaxed and comfortable. The first position the counselor assumes won't necessarily be the only one. The counselor will undoubtedly shift positions during the counseling session, for comfort and as a reflection of his/her feelings.

Again, a word of caution is offered regarding cultural differences in acceptable attending. In some cultures, sitting too close to a client might be considered offensive or threatening; sitting too far away might convey detachment or withdrawal, and individuals vary in the amount of distance or closeness they need. By watching how the client uses space in relation to the counselor, the counselor will probably have an indication of what is comfortable for the client.

c. Accurate verbal following--The counselor communicates to the client by verbal responses that listening and observing are occurring. The most important characteristic of accurate verbal responses is that they relate directly to what the client is expressing. This means the counselor doesn't jump to new topics or interrupt the client but follows the client in what he/she is saying. The counselor takes his/her cues from the client and indicates involvement by simply nodding, using encouraging phrases such as "um-hm" or "I see," repeating key words, or posing one-word questions, such as "Oh?" or "Yes?"

Later in this training program, the counselor will practice more specific types of responses (for example, paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and summarizing) that convey to the client that the counselor has listened and observed. At this point in the program, the counselor can demonstrate accurate verbal following by offering minimal verbal responses, making head movements, and staying with the topic.

Summary of Attending

In attending, the counselor's goal is to listen effectively, to observe the client, and to communicate his/her interest and attentiveness through direct eye contact, relaxed body posture, and accurate verbal following. The skill of attending is the foundation on which all the other skills in this program are built.

Attending Feedback Form

Instructions: *This form is to aid you in observing both videotaped and practice skill demonstrations and in providing feedback in the practice exercise. As observer, your job is to pay attention to the counselor's use of this skill. During the interaction, give your full attention to what the counselor and client say and do. At the end of the demonstration or practice period, quickly check the behaviors you observed. After the practice period(s), report to the counselor the behaviors you have checked.*

Guidelines for effective attending are:

- to communicate listening through frequent and varied eye contact and through facial expression,
- to physically relax and lean forward occasionally, using natural hand and arm movements, and
- to verbally "follow" the client, using a variety of brief encouragements such as "um-hum," "yes," or repeating key words.

Indications that effective attending is not taking place include:

- little eye contact, a fixed stare, a frozen expression;
- stiff or tense posture, no head movements, no hand movement, slouching; and
- topic jumping, cutting off the client.

Behavior	Video 1	Video 2	Practice
1. Maintained frequent and varied eye contact.	____	____	____
2. Looked away from the client when talking or maintained a fixed stare.	____	____	____
3. Displayed varied facial expressions.	____	____	____
4. Showed little or no facial animation or alertness.	____	____	____
5. Used affirmative or encouraging gestures.	____	____	____
6. Had relaxed body posture, leaning forward occasionally.	____	____	____
7. Sat in a fixed or rigid position throughout.	____	____	____
8. Slouched or leaned away from the client.	____	____	____
9. Offered brief vocalizations that encouraged the client to continue talking.	____	____	____
10. Interrupted the client or changed topics arbitrarily.	____	____	____

Attending Feedback Form - continued

On each of the following scales, put a check at a location on the continuum to reflect your judgment of the qualities displayed by the counselor.

WARM	_____	*COLD*
CONCERNED, INVOLVED	_____	*UNINTERESTED*
UNDERSTANDING	_____	*NOT UNDERSTANDING*
OPEN, SHARING	_____	*CLOSED*
RELAXED, AT EASE	_____	*TENSE*

PARAPHRASING

Definition of Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is a counselor response that restates the content of the client's previous statement. Paraphrasing concentrates primarily on cognitive verbal content, that is content which refers to events, people, and things. In paraphrasing, the counselor reflects to the client the verbal essence of his/her last comment or last few comments. Sometimes, paraphrasing may involve simply repeating the client's own words, perhaps emphasizing one word in particular. More often, paraphrasing is using words that are similar to the client's, but fewer in number.

Paraphrasing and reflection of feeling are very similar and therefore are easy to confuse. In both skills, the counselor must identify the client's basic message, either cognitive or affective (pertaining to feeling or emotion), and give that message back to the client using his/her (the counselor's) own words.

The distinguishing feature between paraphrasing and reflection of feeling is the focus of the counselor's response. A paraphrase focuses on the words the client is speaking. Reflection of feeling focuses on the associated feeling or emotion as expressed in the client's tone of voice, rate and volume of speech, posture, and other nonverbal behavior as well as verbal content.

In actual counseling it is neither realistic nor therapeutic to perform only one skill at a time. However, for the purpose of refining the individual skills in this workshop, it is helpful to concentrate on each skill separately. Reflection of feeling will be discussed and practiced in a separate session.

Purposes of Paraphrasing

1. It communicates to the client that the counselor understands or is trying to understand what he/she is saying. Paraphrasing can thus be a good indicator of accurate verbal following.

2. It sharpens a client's meaning to have his/her words rephrased more concisely and often leads the client to expand his/her discussion of the same subject.

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3. It often clarifies confusing content for both the counselor and the client. Even when paraphrasing is not accurate, it is useful because it encourages the client to clarify his/her remarks.

4. It can spotlight an issue by stating it more succinctly, thus offering a direction for the client's subsequent remarks.

5. It enables the counselor to verify his/her perceptions of the verbal content of client's statements.

Components of Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing has two components: determining the basic message and rephrasing.

The counselor uses his/her judgment to determine the basic message that is being expressed in the client's verbal content. Much of the time clients tend to speak in short paragraphs. They seldom state a single thought and wait for a reply. So the counselor must attend to all of the client's verbal content, but decide on the basic message being expressed in the "paragraphs."

After the counselor determines the basic message to be responded to, he/she attempts to give this content back to the client in a more precise way by rephrasing it. The counselor may want to combine several of the client's related comments into one response to the client.

To paraphrase effectively, then, the counselor determines the basic message from the content and rephrases it, usually in similar, but fewer words.

Checking Out

To minimize the possibility of the counselor's letting his/her assumptions distort what the client is saying, the counselor should get in the habit of checking out his/her paraphrasing. This can be done by adding phrases such as, "Is that right?" "Am I correct?" or "Have I heard you correctly?" to the paraphrase. This procedure will usually evoke a response from the client, and the counselor can then judge whether he/she is making assumptions or is accurately attending to the client. Checking out may not be necessary, however, if the client is clearly indicating agreement either verbally or nonverbally.

Assessing the Outcome of Paraphrasing

How effectively a counselor has used paraphrasing can best be judged by the client's next response after a paraphrase. If the paraphrase

is effective, the client may indicate agreement by a word or gesture and may continue to talk further on the same subject.

Sometimes the counselor will not succeed in accurately distilling the client's comments, and the client may reply, "No, that's not what I meant." When this occurs, the counselor's attempt at paraphrasing has still been useful because it allows the counselor to see immediately that he/she has erred either in determining the basic message or in rephrasing the content.

In other instances the client may confirm the accuracy of the counselor's paraphrase, but, having heard his/her meaning expressed in different words, decides to modify or even reverse the meaning entirely to reflect a changed point of view.

Each of these outcomes can be regarded as evidence that the counselor's paraphrase has been effective.

Examples of Paraphrasing

Three examples of client statements and possible paraphrasing responses follow. After reading the examples, (a) indicate next to each response whether it is appropriate or poor paraphrasing and why, and (b) formulate another appropriate paraphrasing response for at least one of the examples.

Client: I think I'm going to move out this weekend. All she ever does is complain about my drinking. Never does any housework, just nags me.

Counselor: Nagging and drinking don't mix. _____

Counselor: Sounds like things are bad at home and you're trying to decide whether to leave. _____

Counselor: It seems you've made the decision that you can't take it any more. _____

Counselor: _____

****

Client: I got stopped again for DWI and may lose my license.

Counselor: So your right to drive could be in jeopardy. _____

Counselor: Sounds like this new DWI offense could mean trouble. _____

Counselor: You just can't stop hot rodding around. _____

Counselor: _____

****

Client: My boss doesn't understand me at all. He doesn't realize I'm always shaky in the morning.

Counselor: I hear you saying that your boss can't see your situation the way you see it. _____

Counselor: Your boss is firm about work starting at 9:00. _____

Counselor: Mornings are a tough time for you. _____

Counselor: _____

****

Summary of Paraphrasing

To paraphrase is to determine the basic message in the client's cognitive statements and concisely rephrase it. The rewording should capture the essence of the cognitive verbal content. Occasionally, an exact repetition of the client's remarks may be an appropriate paraphrase. More commonly, the counselor determines and rephrases the basic message of the verbal content using similar, but fewer, words.

Paraphrasing Feedback Form

Instructions: *This form is to aid you in observing both videotaped and practice skill demonstrations and in providing feedback in the practice exercise. As observer, your job is to pay attention to the counselor's use of this skill. During the interaction, give your full attention to what the counselor and client say and do. At the end of the demonstration or practice period, quickly check the behaviors you observed. After the practice period(s), report to the counselor the behaviors you have checked.*

The basic components of paraphrasing are:

- to determine the basic message that is being expressed in the verbal content of the client's communication, and
- to rephrase the verbal content in similar but fewer words.

Indications that effective paraphrasing is not taking place include:

- missing the basic message of a client statement,
- rambling on at length after a client statement, and
- assuming the client accepts a paraphrase without checking it out.

Behavior	Video 1	Video 2	Practice
1. Responded to the basic cognitive message in the client's statements.	____	____	____
2. Used fewer words than the client to restate the same thought.	____	____	____
3. Checked out the accuracy of paraphrases with a direct question to the client.	____	____	____
4. Responded to only the last few words in the client's verbal content.	____	____	____
5. Sharpened the client's meaning, which encouraged the client to talk further on same subject.	____	____	____
6. Used more words than the client in feeding back client statements.	____	____	____
7. Clarified confusing content.	____	____	____
8. Used a variety of forms of paraphrasing (e.g., questions, exact wording, rephrasing statement).	____	____	____

REFLECTION OF FEELING

Introduction

Dealing with feelings and emotions--one's own or others'--is probably the most difficult part of human relations. One cause of this difficulty is that the dominant American culture does not value open and free expression of feelings and emotions.

At an early age, we learn to control, mask, or deny our feelings. Unfortunately, with most of us, this process is learned well and reinforced continuously in our schooling. Through primary emphasis on intellectual achievement, we are conditioned to restrain, and even deny, our emotions. However, denied or suppressed feelings do not just disappear. Depending up the intensity of the feelings and how long they have been suppressed, they manifest their presence both psychologically and physically in such ways as difficulty in communicating with others, depression, fatigue, tension headaches, and psychosomatic illness. A more constructive approach is to recognize that feelings and emotions exist, accept them as part of ourselves, and learn to express them in ways that promote individual growth and mutually satisfying relationships.

In counseling, we must communicate with the client not only on the factual, or cognitive, level (meaning events, people, things), but also on the affective level (meaning feelings about events, people, and things). Frequently, we may have as clients people who have controlled, inhibited, or denied their feelings and emotions for years. One of our tasks is to help them understand that it is acceptable, even necessary, to be aware of and express their feelings in the counseling relationship. The ability of the counselor to transmit that message is based on the assumption that the counselor can get in touch with, identify, and express his/her own feelings. Our primary focus here is on helping the client to become aware of, identify, and express his/her feelings.

An important concept to understand with regard to reflection of feeling is empathy, which has been identified as one of the essential conditions in counseling. Empathy, in everyday language, means putting oneself in the other person's shoes. More formally, it might be defined as the counselor's attempting to perceive the world through the client's frame of reference. Thus the counselor manifests empathy through his/her ability to perceive what is happening in regard to the client's feelings and to communicate this perception to the client. Reflection of feeling is one of the ways empathy can be communicated.

Definition of Reflection of Feeling

Reflection of feeling is the counselor's expressing the essence of the client's feelings, either stated or implied. In contrast to paraphrasing, reflection of feeling focuses primarily on the emotional element of the client's communication, whether it is verbal or nonverbal. The counselor tries to perceive the emotional state or condition of the client and feed back a response that demonstrates his/her understanding of this state. Reflection of feeling, then, is a empathic response to the client's emotional state or condition.

Purposes of Reflection of Feeling

1. It conveys to the client that the counselor understands or is trying to understand what the client is experiencing and feeling. This empathy for the client usually reinforces the client's willingness to express feelings to the counselor.

2. It clarifies the client's feelings and attitudes by mirroring them in a nonjudgmental way.

3. It brings to the surface feelings of the client that may have been expressed only vaguely.

4. It give the client the opportunity to recognize and accept his/her feelings as part of himself/herself. Sometimes the client may refer to "it" or "them" as the source of a problem, when he/she really means "I was feeling angry."

5. It verifies the counselor's perceptions of what the client is feeling. That is, it allows the counselor to check out with the client whether or not he/she is accurately reflecting what the client is experiencing.

6. It can bring out problem areas without the client feeling pushed.

7. It helps the client infer that feelings are causes of behavior.

Components of Reflection of Feeling

The reflection-of-feeling skill consists of two components: identification and formulation.

The counselor must first identify the basic feeling(s) being expressed verbally or nonverbally by the client. To be able to identify feelings in clients. a counselor must be able to recognize feelings in himself/herself. Although the counselor can't feel the client's feelings, he/she can infer what they might be by processing the verbal and nonverbal

information the client is communicating. The counselor matches the information he/she gains with his/her experiences in order to label the feelings the client seems to be experiencing. Since the counselor has experienced feelings such as joy, anger, pain, fear, and boredom, he/she can remember how they felt.

To recognize or be aware of feelings in the client, the counselor attends to both verbal and nonverbal cues. When he/she is listening effectively to the client's statements, the counselor may perceive feelings that are either directly expressed or implied. Sometimes the verbal indications of feelings may not be as straightforward as they seem. Often "I think" and "I feel" are used interchangeably, although they have different meanings, particularly in counseling. For example, if a client says, "I felt overjoyed at the news," the counselor can infer that the client was happy. However, if the client says, "I feel he is too strict," the counselor cannot reliably infer what the client feels, but only what he/she thinks.

Distinct messages of emotional content also will come from nonverbal cues. Nonverbal indicators of feeling include such things as head and facial movements, posture, gestures, and voice tone and quality. Some examples of specific nonverbal cues are lowered head, folded arms, restlessness, crying, and slowness of speech.

Think back for a moment. When you're depressed, how does your voice sound? When you're angry, what happens to your face, mouth, eyes, jaw, and voice? When you're afraid, what happens to your eyes, your body posture, your gestures? Of course, different people will display different degrees and amounts of emotional intensity in different ways. Only after observing and interacting with a person over time can anyone begin to decide what that individual's nonverbal behavior might really be saying about how he/she is feeling.

In general, though, the counselor can be alert to such facial and body expressions as smiles, eyes widening or narrowing, worry wrinkles, drooping shoulders, or tightly clenched hands. Voice quality is an important area to attend to for signs of emotion. Loudness or softness, changes in tone or inflection, and emphasis on one word are indications of feelings. Sometimes the client may convey conflicting messages with his/her verbal and nonverbal behavior. He/she may say "I'm not upset," when his/her hands are shaking and his/her face is red.

Thus, in identifying feelings, the counselor attempts to enter the client's frame of reference by drawing on his/her own experiences with feelings. The counselor must identify the feelings the client is communicating before he/she can reflect them accurately to the client.

The second component of an effective reflection-of-feeling response is to <u>formulate a response</u> that captures the essence of the feeling expressed by the client. Although the counselor tries to understand and identify the client's feelings as well as he/she can, it is not possible to <u>be</u> the client, so any conclusions drawn should be considered tentative

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and presented as tentative reflections. By remaining tentative and open-minded in formulating verbal responses, the counselor avoids dogmatic-sounding responses that might alienate the client if they are inaccurate.

Examples of appropriate phrases with which a counselor might begin a reflection-of-feeling response are:

It seems that you feel.....
Are you saying that you feel.....
You seem to feel.....
Is it possible that you feel.....
I'm picking up that you feel.....
You appear to be feeling.....
Perhaps you're feeling.....
I sense that you feel.....

Often, counselors find reflection of feeling one of the harder skills to master. Some common errors counselors tend to make in using this skill follow in the next section. These errors may also occur in using some of the other skills in the program.

Common Errors in Formulating Reflection-of-Feeling Responses

1. Stereotypic language--The counselor can fall into a pattern of always beginning reflections in the same way with a phrase such as "You feel...." Some of these phrases were listed above as appropriate, but the counselor should avoid using any one of them too often. The counselor should vary his/her style of reflecting.

2. Timing--Sometimes the inexperienced counselor attempts to reflect feelings after every statement the client makes. This can give an impression of insincerity and may dilute the effect of the technique. At the other extreme, the counselor waits until the client has finished a long series of comments and tries to reflect many feelings in one response. Another error in timing involves pauses. Counselors often don't wait out pauses. Long pauses can mean that the client is trying to say things that are difficult for him/her to say, but the uncomfortable counselor may jump in and respond immediately, in effect interrupting and breaking off the client's struggle to express a complex or painful thought or feeling.

3. Too-shallow or too-deep responses--The counselor should strive to feed back to the client the essence of what he/she is expressing. The counselor should avoid either reflecting a feeling at a level that is more intense than the client is feeling or taking away from the client's meaning by merely labeling the feeling. The goal is to communicate to the client that he/she is understood on the level where he/she is. For example, a client may say, "I feel bad. I had some drinks at the office party last night after I promised myself I wouldn't." A too-shallow response from the counselor might be, "You mean you're sorry." A too-deep response might be, "You feel really guilty about your drinking."

Checking Out

Checking out perceptions is as important in reflection of feeling as it is in paraphrasing, even though the refection of feeling is phrased tentatively. The addition of a questioning phrase, usually at the end of the reflection-of-feeling statement, will ensure that the counselor is not making unfounded assumptions about the client. For example, "I sense that you feel discouraged today. Is that right?"

Assessing the Outcome of Reflection of Feeling

In reflection of feeling, as in paraphrasing, the effectiveness of the activity can be determined by the client's response. The client may confirm or disclaim the reflection. If the reflection is accurate, the client is more likely to continue discussing the feeling reflected. An inaccurate reflection will often bring a correcting response from the client, which results in clarification. In either case, the net result of reflection-of-feeling responses made by the counselor should be an increased focus on feelings by the client as he perceives that discussing feelings is acceptable in counseling.

Examples of Reflection of Feeling

Three examples of client statements and possible reflection-of-feeling responses follow. After reading the examples, (a) indicate next to each response whether it is appropriate or poor reflection of feeling and why, and (b) formulate another appropriate reflection-of-feeling response for at least one of the examples.

Client: I'm afraid that I have some influence on his drinking. Like I may be one of the reasons he drinks so much.

Counselor: You appear to be feeling guilty that you may be a part of his drinking. _____

Counselor: You worry that you may contribute to his drinking. _____

Counselor: You feel he drinks too much. _____

Counselor: _____

****

Client: I didn't want to come here. There is nothing wrong with me. I only came to see you because my wife insisted.

Counselor: You seem resentful about coming here. _____

Counselor: You feel that you're a perfectly normal person. _____

Counselor: I get the impression that you're annoyed. _____

Counselor: _____

****

Client: God, I hate my ma. She tries to run my life for me. I feel almost as strongly about my dad. He just sits back and lets her run everything. As long as he's got his booze, he's ok.

Counselor: You feel guilty because you can't accept the idea that you hate your parents. _____

Counselor: Sounds like you resent your mother for being too strong, and your father for being too weak. _____

Counselor: I'm hearing you express two different feelings--irritation at your mother and impatience at your dad's behavior. _____

Counselor: _____

****

Summary of Reflection of Feeling

Reflection of feeling involves identifying the essence of the feelings the client is expressing and formulating a response that indicates that the counselor understands. Usually the counselor offers fresh words that capture the basic verbal or nonverbal feeling message of the client.

Reflection of Feeling Feedback Form

Instructions: *This form is to aid you in observing both videotaped and practice skill demonstrations and in providing feedback in the practice exercise. As observer, your job is to pay attention to the counselor's use of this skill. During the interaction, give your full attention to what the counselor and client say and do. At the end of the demonstration or practice period, quickly check the behaviors you observed. After the practice period(s), report to the counselor the behaviors you have checked.*

The basic components in reflection of feeling are:

- to identify the basic feeling(s) being expressed verbally or nonverbally, and
- to formulate a response which captures the essence of the feeling(s).

Indications that effective reflection of feeling is not taking place include:

- responding solely to content and not to feelings,
- using words to respond to feelings which are at a different level than the client expressed, and
- assuming the client accepts a reflection of feeling without checking it out.

Behavior	Video 1	Video 2	Practice
1. Responded to the essence of feelings in the client's statement or behavior.	____	____	____
2. Reflected the client's feelings at the same level of intensity expressed by the client.	____	____	____
3. Used a variety of phrases; avoided stereotypical feeling responses.	____	____	____
4. Checked out directly with the client the accuracy of the reflection of feeling response.	____	____	____
5. Responded to nonverbal indications of feelings in the client.	____	____	____
6. Used new words to capture the essence of the client's feelings.	____	____	____

SUMMARIZING

Definition of Summarizing

Summarizing is the tying together by the counselor of the main points discussed in a counseling session. Summarizing can focus on both feelings and content and is appropriate after a discussion of a particular topic within the session or as a review at the end of the session of the principal issues discussed. In either case, a summary should be brief, to the point, and without new or added meanings.

In many respects, summarizing is similar to, or an extension of, paraphrasing and reflection of feeling in that the counselor seeks to determine the basic meanings being expressed in content or feelings and give these meanings back to the client in fresh words. Summarizing differs primarily in the span of time it is concerned with. In paraphrasing, a statement or brief paragraph occurring over a short period of time is rephrased. In summarizing verbal content, several of the client's statements, the entire session, or even several sessions are pulled together.

In reflection of feeling, the counselor responds to the last feeling or feelings expressed or displayed. In summarizing feelings, the counselor reviews numerous feelings expressed or displayed over a longer period of time.

In summarizing, then, the counselor is pulling together a greater number of statements and/or feelings that have come out over an extended period of time.

Purposes of Summarizing

1. It can ensure continuity in the direction of the session by providing a focus.

2. It can clarify a client's meaning by having his/her scattered thoughts and feelings pulled together.

3. It often encourages the client to explore an issue further once a central theme has been identified.

4. It communicates to the client that the counselor understands or is trying to understand what the client is saying and feeling.

5. It enables the counselor to verify his/her perceptions of the content and feelings discussed or displayed by the client during the session. The counselor can check out whether he/she accurately attended and responded without changing the meanings expressed.

6. It can close discussion on a given topic, thus clearing the way for a new topic.

7. It provides a sense of movement and progress to the client by drawing several of his/her thoughts and feelings into a common theme.

8. It can terminate a session in a logical way through review of the major issues discussed in the entire session.

Components of Summarizing

Accurate summarizing has two components: selection and tying together.

The counselor uses his/her judgment to select the key points discussed. As the counselor picks out the highlights of content and feelings, general themes usually begin to emerge. When deciding what material to summarize, the counselor should note consistent and inconsistent patterns that have evolved in the session. For example, the client may keep coming back to one particular issue, implicitly emphasizing its importance, or the client may seem to contradict himself/herself by making conflicting statements at different times during the session.

After selecting the principal points discussed or displayed, the counselor attempts to tie together these points and to feed them back to the client in a more concise way. In drawing together the content and feelings, the counselor should avoid adding his/her own ideas, which could well be assumptions. The idea is to give back to the client essentially what he/she has said concisely, using fresh words.

Assessing Outcomes of Summarizing

The outcome of a summmarization depends to a large extent on where in the counseling session it occurs. If the summarizing of a particular topic occurs during the session, it is likely to encourage the client to talk further. If summarizing occurs at the close of the session, it is more likely to terminate further discussion.

How effectively a counselor has summarized the essence of the verbal content and feelings the client has expressed can best be determined by the client's response to the summary. The client may affirm that the counselor has tied together points already discussed and, depending on

where in the session the summary is made, continue to explore the topic, begin a related or new topic, or accept the counselor's remarks as a wrap-up of the session.

Sometimes the counselor may not have accurately pulled together the essential content and feelings of the client, or may have added assumptions of his/her own to the exchange. In that case, the client might say, "That isn't quite what I said," or "I agree with that except for...." The counselor and client can then resolve areas in question before proceeding or ending the session.

As with paraphrasing and reflection of feeling, the counselor should make a practice of checking out the accuracy of a summary with the client to minimize the chances of making unwarranted assumptions.

Examples of Summarizing

To a divorced woman exploring problems that she is having with a teen-age son, who is drinking heavily:

> As I understand what you've been saying durin the past few minutes, you seem to be struggling with three possible ways to handle the situation: you might continue trying to reason with your son yourself; you might ask his father to help you deal with the boy; or you might stop discussing the problem with your son and punish him by taking away his privileges.

****

At the end of a session with a male client:

> Let's take a look at what we've covered in today's session. It sounds like you've felt inadequate in dealing with several areas of your life--your family, your job, and now your drinking.

****

Summary of Summarizing

To summarize is to select the key points or basic meanings from the client's verbal content and feelings and succinctly tie them together. The summarization should accurately reflect the essence of the client's statements and feelings and should not include assumptions of the counselor. Summarizing, then, is a review of the main points already discussed in the session to ensure continuity in a focused direction.

Summarizing Feedback Form

Instructions: *This form is to aid you in observing both videotaped and practice skill demonstrations and in providing feedback in the practice exercise. As observer, your job is to pay attention to the counselor's use of this skill. During the interaction, give your full attention to what the counselor and client say and do. At the end of the demonstration or practice period, quickly check the behaviors you observed. After the practice period(s), report to the counselor the behaviors you have checked.*

The basic components of summarizing are:

- to select the major points or basic meanings which have been discussed, expressed, or displayed, and
- to tie together and major points or basic meanings concisely in fresh words.

Indications that effective summarizing is not taking place include:

- missing main theme of client content,
- not pulling together several ideas or feelings, and
- pulling together several ideas but adding new meanings.

Behavior	Video 1	Video 2	Practice
1. Responded to the basic meanings the client expressed over an extended period of time.	____	____	____
2. Tied together several feelings statements or nonverbal cues of feelings.	____	____	____
3. Clarified meanings expressed by the client, which resulted in further talk on the same topic.	____	____	____
4. Missed a main theme expressed by a client or responded only to a minor point.	____	____	____
5. Added meanings to content expressed by the client.	____	____	____
6. Checked out directly with client the accuracy of the summary.	____	____	____

PROBING

Definition of Probing

Probing is a counselor's use of a question or statement to direct the client's attention inward to explore his/her situation in more depth. A probing question, sometimes called an "open-ended question," requires more than a one-word (yes or no) answer from the client.

When phrased as a statement, the probe contains a strong element of direction by the counselor; for example, "Tell me more about your relationship with your parents," or "Suppose we explore a little more your ideas about what an alcoholic is."

Purposes of Probing

1. It can help focus the client's attention on a feeling or content area.

2. It may help the counselor better understand what the client is describing by giving him/her more information about the client's situation.

3. It may encourage the client to elaborate, clarify, or illustrate what he/she has been saying.

4. It sometimes enhances the client's awareness and understanding of his/her situation or feelings.

5. It directs the client's attention to areas the counselor thinks need attention.

Components of Probing

The two components of probing are identification and open-ended phrasing.

The counselor uses his/her judgment to identify a subject or feelings area touched on by the client that needs further exploration. As with the other skills practiced in this training program, it is important that the counselor use probing only after attending to the client. By listening to and observing the client, the counselor may identify matters that either seem unresolved or seem to need further development.

In probing, the counselor decides what areas might need further attention, whereas in paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and summarizing, the counselor attempts to feed back to the client in a more concise way the same material or feelings the client presented or displayed.

After identifying the area that needs to be explored further, the counselor attempts to phrase an open-ended question or statement to help include such words as what, where, when, or how. For example, "When do you feel that way?" "Where does that occur for you?"

It is generally best to avoid asking questions beginning with the words are, is, do, or why. The first three words tend to elicit one-word answers. "Why" frequently poses a question that the client cannot answer. As a result, the client may feel defensive and resist further exploration of the topic, or may indulge in vague speculation unrelated to the topic under discussion.

Assessing the Outcomes of Probing

As with the other skills studied, how effectively a counselor has probed can best be determined by the client's response. If the probe encourages the client to talk in greater depth about his/her feelings or the content identified by the counselor, then the technique has probably been helpful. Similarly, if the probe seems to make the client more aware of a situation he/she has tended to avoid or ignore, and more apt to discuss it specifically, then the probe has been effective. In general the probe may be seen as effective when the client responds by talking further about the subject or feeling on what seems like a deeper level (as opposed to a superficial, intellectualizing level).

Sometimes, the counselor may probe an area that the client is not yet ready to discuss or deal with. In that case, the counselor might encounter extended silence or some other form of resistance on the part of the client. Or the client may simply say "I'd rather not talk about that." The probe might still be considered effective in this case, because the counselor may have succeeded in directing the client's attention to the problem area which either the client or the counselor might come back to later.

Examples of Probing

Two examples of client statements and possible probing responses follow. After reading the examples, indicate next to each response whether it is appropriate or poor probing and why.

Client: Mother and Dad were fighting and he was pounding on her and knocking her down, so I beat him up and went out and had a steak.

Counselor: How were you feeling at the point where you decided to beat your father? _____

Counselor: Tell me more about what you were going through as that happened. _____

Counselor: Do you often have fights with your father? _____

****

Client: I've been doing this job for years now and nobody ever complained before and now they're saying my job performance hasn't been as good.

Counselor: In what ways specifically do they say your work hasn't been good? _____

Counselor: You're not going to blow this job, are you? _____

Counselor: I'm wondering what your reaction was to criticism of your job performance. _____

****

Summary of Probing

Probing is the use of a counselor question or statement to direct the client's attention inward to explore his/her situation in depth. The counselor identifies an area which seems to need exploration and then openly phrases a response. Used effectively, probing should help both the client and counselor to better understand the client's situation.

Probing Feedback Form

Instructions: *This form is to aid you in observing both videotaped and practice skill demonstrations and in providing feedback in the practice exercise. As observer, your job is to pay attention to the counselor's use of this skill. During the interaction, give your full attention to what the counselor and client say and do. At the end of the demonstration or practice period, quickly check the behaviors you observed. After the practice period(s), report to the counselor the behaviors you have checked.*

The basic components of probing are:

- to identify areas that the client has raised which need further exploration, and
- to phrase open-ended questions beginning with words such as what, where, when, or how, or to phrase open-ended statements such as "I'd like to hear more about..."

Indications that effective probing is not taking place include:

- not following up on areas which seem unresolved or unclear, and
- asking questions which can be answered with a yes or no.

Behavior	Video 1	Video 2	Practice
1. Asked questions which could be answered with "yes," "no," or one word.	____	____	____
2. Identified content areas or feelings which seemed unresolved by the client.	____	____	____
3. Did not pursue potential areas for further exploration.	____	____	____
4. Phrased open-ended questions beginning with words such as what, when, where, and how.	____	____	____
5. Encouraged the client to clarify, elaborate, or illustrate unclear issues.	____	____	____
6. Provided direction and focus through open questions and statements.	____	____	____

COUNSELOR SELF-DISCLOSURE

Introduction

The importance of identifying and responding to feelings has been stressed throughout this program. Although our focus has been on the feelings of the client, the feelings of the counselor are just as important. The counselor should be aware of his/her feelings during the counseling session, and this awareness should lead to congruency between the counselor's verbal and nonverbal behavior.

If the counselor becomes impatient with the client's evasive statements, this impatience will probably show in his/her own nonverbal behavior. Therefore, it should be constructively expressed. Showing honest and open involvement with the client by being congruent is one way the counselor can be genuine. When the counselor provides a model of genuineness, the client is more likely to perceive that being genuine is acceptable and necessary in counseling. It may also establish a pattern that the client may apply to his other social interactions.

For the counselor to be genuine and congruent in counseling, he/she must be aware not only of feelings, but also of aspects of himself/herself that others may see. In an attempt to clarify the kinds of information available about all people, Joe Luft and Harry Ingham contributed their names and ideas to the concept of Johari Window.* The Window is a visual way of describing information available about any person. The four "panes" of the Window are:

1. Information known by all about a person (open area)

2. Information known by the person, but not by others (hidden area)

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* For a diagram of the Johari Window and a discussion of the related concept, see:

Hanson, P. G. "The Johari Window: A Model for Soliciting and Giving Feedback," J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones, Editors. The Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators. LaJolla, Calif.: University Associates, Inc., 1973, pp. 114-119.

Johnson, Vernon E. I'll Quit Tomorrow. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1973, p. 120.

3. Information known by others, but not by the person (blind area)

4. Information not known by the person or by others (unknown area).

Individual awareness, which contributes to genuineness and congruency, depends on any person's increasing the information in his/her open area while reducing the blind and hidden areas.

Definition of Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure is a sharing by the counselor of his/her own feelings, attitudes, opinions, and experiences with a client for the benefit of the client. Self-disclosure should include significant content and be relevant to the client's situation. Self-disclosure in the present (the here and now of the counseling session) occurs when the counselor communicates his/her feelings about the client or the session, such as by saying, "I'm pleased that you can talk about these things." Self-disclosure may also include the counselor's revealing experiences he/she has had in the past that seem relevant to the client's current situation.

Purposes of Self-Disclosure

1. It tends to build a sense of trust and rapport between the counselor and the client.

2. It helps reduce the client's feelings that he/she is unique and alone in the situation he/she is experiencing.

3. It often enables the counseling relationship to move to deeper levels.

4. It fosters a feeling of empathy in the counseling relationship when the client perceives that the counselor may indeed be able to see things from the client's point of view.

5. It tends to promote the expression of feelings by the client in the counseling relationship.

6. It may create an atmosphere in which the client feels free to express content that he/she had previously avoided.

7. It may encourage the client to explore further a particular subject or feeling by sharing the counselor's experience with a similar situation.

Guidelines for Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure requires knowledge of principles to guide the appropriate timing and content of the self-disclosure.

1. The counselor's disclosure should relate directly to the client's situation.--This principle pertains primarily to disclosures about the counselor's past experiences. To help decide whether an experience is relevant to the client's situation, the counselor may first use paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, summarizing, and probing responses to ensure that he/she does understand the client's situation.

2. The counselor should disclose only experiences that have actually happened to him/her.--Using a personal pronoun such as I, me, my, or myself in a self-disclosure can give a clear message to the client that the counselor is telling about an experience that happened to him/her and is not merely relating the hearsay experience of a third party. This principle is most appropriate to the "past" type of self-disclosure.

3. The counselor has the option of revealing information about himself/herself on various levels of intimacy.--The counselor could reveal information that is in the open area of the Johari Window and probably known to many. Or, if the counseling relationship has produced a deep level of mutual trust, empathy, and genuineness, the counselor might reveal to the client an aspect of himself/herself that few others know. The guiding principle as to what level of information to reveal lies in the answers to two questions: Will it benefit the client and will the counselor feel comfortable in revealing that information?

Problems of Self-Disclosure

There are also some problems associated with self-disclosure of which the counselor should be aware.

1. Self-disclosure in the present (the here and now of the session) can have an immediate and sometimes extreme effect on the client.--When the counselor reveals a current feeling about the client (for example, that the counselor feels bored), the client may feel rejected or belittled. In deciding whether to disclose what might be perceived by the client as a negative feeling, the counselor must ask himself/herself whether he/she is disclosing for the sake of the client or out of a personal need. Positive feelings (pleasure, happiness, pride) revealed by the counselor usually do not result in as obvious reactions in the client as do negative feelings. The counselor should recall that he/she is attempting to be a genuine, honest person in the counseling relationship and therefore must consider revealing positive and negative feelings if such disclosures would benefit the client.

2. The use of counselor self-disclosure shifts the focus of the session away from the client to the counselor.--The counselor must guard

against allowing subsequent responses to leave the focus on the counselor and thus tend to deny or downgrade the experiences of the client. The counselor should keep in mind that the self-disclosure is for the benefit of the client. The client is not likely to be helped if the counselor proceeds to work through a need of his/her own.

3. The premature use of an intimate past experience or a threatening present feeling could make the client anxious and could damage the counseling realtionship.--If the counselor is quite sure that he/she understands the client's situation and that the conditions of trust, empathy, and genuineness are present in the relationship, the self-disclosure will probably be appropriate.

4. There is a certain amount of risk to the counseling relationship any time the counselor uses self-disclosure.--The counselor reveals something personal about himself/herself that the client may ignore, deny, or ridicule. In exposing himself/herself, the counselor stands to gain by being perceived as an honest, genuine person but runs the risk that the client's perception of him/her may change and thus change the dynamics of the counseling relationship. If the client's perception of the counselor has changed negatively because of an inappropriate self-disclosure, the counseling relationship may be disrupted.

Not all counselors may feel comfortable sharing personal experiences, but all counselors should recognize the value of the "here and now" self-disclosures that foster a climate of trust and openness. Each counselor makes his/her own decision about whether to use self-disclosure in counseling. When self-disclosure is used appropriately, the benefits, in the form of a deeper counseling relationship, can be great. The counselor will probably be using self-disclosure appropriately if he/she continually asks the question "is this disclosure for the sake of the client?"

Examples of Self-Disclosure

Below are three client statements, the first two followed by possible self-disclosure responses. After reading the examples, (a) indicate next to each response whether it is appropriate or poor self-disclosure and why, and (b) formulate an appropriate self-disclosure for the third client statement. (Assume that the appropriate conditions in the relationship have been established.)

Past:

Client: You know, I feel so ashamed. All my friends are going to find out that I have a drinking problem and I don't know how I can face them.

Counselor: I think I'm aware of how you might be feeling because I can remember how ashamed I felt, at first, when I had to admit to my friends that I am an alcoholic.

Counselor: I think I know how you might feel. I'm not an alcoholic, but my father is and I can remember my shame and embarrassment about the secret getting out. _____

Counselor: I know how you feel. I felt really embarrassed when my father came to my graduation in jeans. _____

****

Present:

Client: Well, I did have a few drinks before coming here tonight, but it doesn't matter because I'm sticking to my treatment plan.

Counselor: I have to admit I'm feeling disappointed right now. I thought you were doing so well in staying away from alcohol. _____

Counselor: If you think you've got problems, let me tell you how hard it is for me to go to a cocktail party and not to drink. _____

Counselor: I'm trying very hard to control my feelings of anger toward you. I think you know that we decided you shouldn't come here if you had been drinking. _____

****

Client: Sometimes I feel so discouraged. It seems like nothing will ever change, no matter what I do.

Counselor: _____

_____

****

Summary of Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure involves the counselor sharing his/her own feelings, attitudes, opinions, and experiences with a client for the benefit of the client. The self-disclosure of the counselor might be revealing a present feeling or relating a relevant past experience. Both timing and appropriateness of content are central to effective self-disclosure. Used appropriately, counselor self-disclosure should increase the level of trust, genuineness, and empathy in the counseling relationship and reduce the client's feeling of being unique in his/her problems or difficulties.

Self-Disclosure Feedback Form

Instructions: *This form is to aid you in observing both videotaped and practice skill demonstrations and in providing feedback in the practice exercise. As observer, your job is to pay attention to the counselor's use of this skill. During the interaction, give your full attention to what the counselor and client say and do. At the end of the demonstration or practice period, quickly check the behaviors you observed. After the practice period(s), report to the counselor the behaviors you have checked.*

Guidelines for counselor self-disclosure are:

- to relate the disclosure directly to the client's situation,
- to disclose only first-hand experiences which are true, and
- to keep the level of intimacy comfortable for the counselor and client.

Indications that appropriate self-disclosure is not taking place include:

- counselor verbal behavior which does not agree with nonverbal behavior,
- allowing focus of session to shift and remain with counselor, and
- signs of anxiety in client after a counselor self-disclosure.

Behavior	Video 1	Video 2	Practice
1. When counselor nonverbal behavior indicated presence of feelings, verbal behavior acknowledged this.	____	____	____
2. Related experience of a friend for client's benefit.	____	____	____
3. Revealed very intimate level material which seemed to make client uncomfortable.	____	____	____
4. Allowed focus of session to remain on counselor after a self-disclosure.	____	____	____
5. Disclosed only material directly relating to the client's situation.	____	____	____
6. Shared feelings about the client or the counseling relationship.	____	____	____
7. Used self-disclosure as a confessional or to meet a need of the counselor.	____	____	____

INTERPRETING

Introduction

Most people place limits on how they will look at problems or situations. As a result of this restricted outlook, people make comments like "I could never do that." When asked why they couldn't, they often don't know. They just know that they have never considered doing such a thing. This kind of thinking produces narrow vision, which hinders people from arriving at other ways of looking at problems or situations. People thus become further entrenched in the one position rather than trying to open up their vision or perspective.

The counselor, as well as the client, is subject to falling into the trap of restricted thinking. After learning the skill of interpreting, the counselor will be able to help clients broaden their perspectives. To do so, the counselor has to broaden his/her own way of viewing problems and situations.

Definition of Interpreting

Interpreting is a technique used by the counselor to present the client with alternative ways of looking at his/her situation. For example, the counselor might use a different perspective to explain events to a client so that he/she might be able to see the problem in a new light and perhaps generate his/her own fresh ways of looking at it.

Interpreting differs from reflection of feeling, paraphrasing, and summarizing in that it usually involves the addition of the counselor's ideas to the basic messages being expressed or manifested by the client. In other words, in reflection of feelings, paraphrasing, and summarizing, the counselor attempts to understand and maintain the client's frame of reference. In interpreting, the counselor offers a new frame of reference to the client. Interpreting, as defined here, is not the "in-depth" type of interpretation that psychoanalysts might do. In this training program, the emphasis in interpretation is not on digging into the client's psyche but on offering alternative points of view in regard to his/her immediate problem or situation.

Purposes of Interpreting

1. It helps the client realize that there is more than one way to look at most situations, problems, and solutions.

2. It offers the client a role model of the counselor seeking alternative ways of viewing events in life.

3. It can teach the client how to use self-interpretation to explore new points of view.

4. It can help the client understand his/her problems more clearly.

5. It often generates new and distinctive solutions to problems.

6. It may prompt the client to act more effectively when he/she sees other solutions to problems.

7. It often enables the client to gain a better understanding of his/her underlying feelings and how these might relate to verbal messages he/she has expressed.

Components of Interpreting

Effective interpreting has three components: determining and restating basic messages; adding counselor ideas for a new frame of reference; and "checking out" these ideas with the client.

The basic framework on which all of the counseling skills presented thus far have been built is the ability to listen effectively and observe carefully. It is especially important that the counselor employ the skills of attending, paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and summarizing prior to and in conjunction with interpreting. The first step in interpreting is to determine the basic messages the client has expressed or displayed and restate them. The counselor seeks to determine the essence of what the client is saying or doing (the client's frame of reference) and then restates this in a paraphrase, reflection of feeling, or summary.

As the counselor is determining the basic messages and restating them, he/she probably will have some ideas or hunches about alternative ways of viewing the client's situation, or may begin to see connections, relationships, or patterns in the events the client describes. When these ideas are included in the material being restated to the client, the counselor is adding his/her ideas to offer the client a new frame of reference from which to view his/her situation.

Because the counselor is departing from the client's frame of reference and offering alternative viewpoints, it becomes very important to phrase any interpretation tentatively or to check out directly with the client his/her reaction to any new points of view. Tentative phrases such as "The way I see it..." or "I wonder if..." are appropriate ways to begin an interpretation. Sometimes the counselor might want to phrase the interpretation as a question--for example, "Do you think, then, that

you might be uncomfortable with older men because of your poor relationship with your father?" This form of interpretation is more tentative than a statement and thus there is a greater possibility that the client will see the offered interpretation as a possibility rather than as a fact. Whether the counselor is on target or completely off, the client is more likely to react to an interpretation openly if it is offered tentatively.

Another way of checking out how the interpretation is received by the client is to add a question onto the end of the new point of view such as, "How does that hit you?" or "Am I really far off?" However the counselor relays the tentativeness of his interpretation, it is imperative that the counselor let the client know it is merely an alternative way of looking at the situation and not necessarily the only or right way.

Guidelines for Effective Interpreting

Interpreting is a more complex and subtle skill than others included in this program. Because it can be a potent promoter of behavior change, however, it is worth the effort required to learn interpreting and use it effectively. Some general guidelines follow:

1. In formulating interpretations, the counselor should use simple language, close to the level at which the client is operating. He/she should avoid jumping too far ahead of the client, indulging in speculation, or stating the interpretation in such a way as to seem to be showing off psychological expertise. An example of not staying at the same level as the client's is one in which the counselor replies to the client's remark that he wishes his dad would lose some weight, with, "You're suffering from typical castration anxiety complicated by Oedipal conflicts."

2. Added ideas or explanations that the counselor offers to the client are often expressed to the client in terms of a particular theory of behavior and personality, such as Gestalt, behavioristic, rational-emotive, or psychoanalytic. Such a theory will probably provide some of the labels the counselor will tend to put on feelings and events in the client's life. The counselor should, of course, be aware of what theoretical position he/she operates from. However, in this training program, no discussion of various theoretical positions is given.

3. The counselor should encourage the client to get in the habit of considering a range of alternative ways to view his/her situation. The counselor may serve as a model for the kind of unfettered thinking by presenting an alternative and then asking the client to suggest others. For example, to a client who has said that feelings of loneliness have caused him to drink in the past, the counselor might say, "Let's look at some things you might do to deal with that lonely feeling, other than drink. One thing you could do is call your A.A. sponsor and talk to him for a while. What are some other things you might do?"

Outcomes Expected from Interpreting

The effectiveness of interpretation can be determined by the client's reaction to any frame of reference offered. If the alternative point of view is close to what the client has expressed, the client might immediately accept the interpretation as a useful way to rethink the problem. In fact, the client might seem to get a sudden recognition of what the problem is. A response such as "I just realized that's it," could be a typical reply.

If the interpretation varies somewhat from what the client has expressed, several reactions are possible. The client might accept a new frame of reference tentatively--"I'll have to think about that one." On the other hand, he/she might reject the interpretation completely or say "Yes, but...." Or the client might accept it too uncritically. The counselor should be cautious in proceeding in the direction of an interpretation that the client accepts without any hesitation, because it could mean that the client does not feel free to challenge anything the counselor says. However, if the counselor keeps in mind the procedure of checking out perceptions with the client, the counselor's interpreting and subsequent responses will be made tentatively or cautiously.

If the interpretation is too extreme, the client might become anxious or threatened and the session could be distrupted. Or the client, again, might accept the interpretation at a cautious or tentative level.

Although the client will usually make some sort of response immediately after an interpretation (as opposed to saying nothing), the actual effect of the attempt to offer an alternative point of view may not be realized by either client or counselor until later. The client may come back to the next session, after having given the new point of view some thought, and report that he/she wishes to explore that or other alternatives to the way he/she had been thinking.

Examples of Interpreting

Below are two brief client/counselor dialogues demonstrating the use of interpreting. After reading the examples, formulate an appropriate interpreting response for one of the examples.

Client: I couldn't let my son help me now that I'm down and out. I've got that shred of pride left--because, you see, I remember when he was a kid and I didn't turn my hand to help him. I traipsed around the country--his mother died when the kid was born--and I let the relatives push him around and stick him in foster homes--and now....

Counselor: Your behavior in the past makes you feel embarrassed about the help your son wants to give you now, is that what you mean? (Reflection of Feeling)

Client: Yeah, Yeah, I'm no good to him and then he wants to help me. I mean it felt like a knife stuck in me when we met the other day and he said, "We can make a go of it together, Dad--I've got a little money saved up." No, No, I won't let him do it. I will clear out of here. It'll be hard, but--I haven't done one thing for him, or anyone else for that matter.

Counselor: Sounds like you're struggling with whether to leave or accept help from him. (Paraphrase)

Client: Yeah, I guess maybe I have always had this thing about not owing nothing to nobody and them not owing me nothing. But now I don't know--my son really seems to want to help me. I just don't know what to do.

Counselor: At this point you feel you don't deserve any help from you son, yet he seems to want to give it. Have you considered the possibility that maybe he doesn't hold the past against you and really loves you? (Interpreting)

Counselor: _____

_____

****

Client: I keep remembering how I walked out on her and the kids. Five years ago--the law never did catch up with me--I thought I was pretty smart--but now--God, I was such a heel. I don't see how I could have done it.

Counselor: As you see it, your past behavior was pretty dreadful. ((Paraphrase)

Client: Yeah, that's right. I'm so ashamed I can't look people in the eye. Now I can't find her--not a trace. Her relatives won't tell me where she is. I don't blame them--but how could I have done it? Just because it was tough going. I tell you, I'll never have any self-respect.

Counselor: Sounds like you're feeling kind of hopeless and down now, but it also seems like you're feeling really guilty about your past. Have you thought that maybe she and the kids wouldn't want to see you after all

these years and that your trying to find them is something you are doing to make you feel less guilty and not for their benefit? (Interpreting)

Counselor: _____

_____

****

Summary of Interpreting

Interpreting is presenting the client with alternative ways of looking at his/her situation. It involves determining and restating the basic messages of the client, adding counselor ideas to this material for a new frame of reference, and checking out with the client the acceptability of the new point of view. Used effectively, interpreting should assist the client to realize that there is more than one way of viewing most situations and to help him/her apply this kind of unrestricted thinking to all aspects of his/her life.

Interpreting Feedback Form

Instructions: *This form is to aid you in observing both videotaped and practice skill demonstrations and in providing feedback in the practice exercise. As observer, your job is to pay attention to the counselor's use of this skill. During the interaction, give your full attention to what the counselor and client say and do. At the end of the demonstration or practice period, quickly check the behaviors you observed. After the practice period(s), report to the counselor the behaviors you have checked.*

The basic components of interpreting are:

- to determine the basic message which the client has expressed or displayed,
- to add ideas of counselor to offer a new frame of reference, and
- to check out directly with the client reactions to the new point of view.

Indications that effective interpreting is not taking place include:

- offering a point of view which is far from the level where client is operating,
- using psychological jargon which the client might not understand, and
- offering an alternative point of view as the only solution to a problem.

Behavior	Video 1	Video 2	Practice
1. Used responses that suggested alternative ways of looking at the client's situation.	____	____	____
2. Checked out directly with the client the acceptability of the new point of view.	____	____	____
3. Encouraged the client to practice self-interpretation.	____	____	____
4. Indulged in wild speculation or jumped far ahead of the client.	____	____	____
5. Pointed out that the suggested interpretation is not the only way of looking at the situation.	____	____	____
6. Used a response which seemed to prompt the client to act more effectively.	____	____	____
7. Used technical or clinical words in offering a new point of view.	____	____	____

CONFRONTATION

Definition of Confrontation

Confrontation is the deliberate use of a question or statement by the counselor to induce the client to face what the counselor thinks the client is avoiding. The client's avoidance is usually revealed by a discrepancy or contradiction in his/her statements and behavior. Thus, confrontive responses point out discrepancies either within the client or in the client's interaction with the environment. In confrontation, the counselor frequently identifies contradictions that are outside the client's frame of reference, whereas paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and summarizing involve responding within the client's frame of reference. In using confrontation, the counselor gives honest feedback about what he/she perceives is actually happening with the client. Confrontation should not include accusations, evaluations, or solutions to problems.

Purposes of Confrontation

1. It helps the client become more congruent (what he/she says corresponds with how he/she behaves) when the client sees how he/she is being perceived by the counselor.

2. It establishes the counselor as a role model in using direct, honest, and open communication.

3. It tends to focus on problems about which the client might take action or change his/her behavior.

4. It often breaks down the defenses of the client which he/she has consciously or unconsciously put up.

5. It tends to enrich the condition of empathy in the counseling relationship when the client perceives the confrontation as being done by a concerned counselor.

6. It encourages the client to acknowledge his/her feelings and behavior by bringing to the surface those he/she has denied. Once the client has accepted ownership of these feelings and behavior, he/she is more likely to accept responsibility for them.

Types of Discrepancies

A discrepancy or contradiction in the client is often a clue to the counselor that confrontation is indicated. A discrepancy or contradiction might be one of the following general types:

1. A discrepancy between how the client sees himself/herself and how others see him/her--for example, the client may describe himself as an outgoing, talkative person, but the counselor perceives the client as extremely quiet and reserved.

2. A contradiction between what the client says and how he/she behaves--for example, the client says she is not depressed, but she is talking slowly, sitting in a slumped posture, looking like she is ready to cry.

3. A discrepancy between two statements by the client--for example, a client may say he wants to be treated for his drinking problem, but later says the only important thing to him is saving his driver's license.

4. A discrepancy between what the client says he/she is feeling and the way most people would react in a similar situation--for example, a client may say that if his wife leaves he doesn't care if he ever gets to see his children again.

5. A contradiction between what the client is now saying he/she believes and how he/she has acted in the past--for example, a client may say she has no trouble staying away from the bottle, but she has had three slips in a month.

Using Confrontation Effectively

There are a few guidelines that the counselor should keep in mind when formulating a confrontive response. First, and perhaps most important, mutual trust and empathy must already be firmly established as part of the counseling relationship. Confrontation should come across as a positive and constructive act by a caring counselor, not as a negative and punitive act of a judgmental counselor. This attitude of empathy and caring can be transmitted not only by what the counselor says but also by his/her tone of voice and facial expression when the confrontive response is introduced into the session.

The counselor should also keep in mind that the most effective confrontive responses are those that address specific, concrete attributes of the client's behavior that the client can do something to change. It isn't very helpful to confront general behavior, for example, "You're always talking about changing your behavior, so why don't you do it?" An example of a specific confrontation would be, "You say you want to quit drinking, but what I see you doing is figuring out how to get a pint to get through the day."

Confrontation may be directed toward the client's assets (strengths) or his/her limitations (weaknesses). The counselor should be wary of always identifying contradictions that point up weaknesses in the client. Confrontive responses can be used constructively by focusing on strengths of the client. For example, to the client who expresses lack of confidence in his ability to handle stressful situations without drinking, the counselor might say, "Last time this happened you called me and did most of the work of sorting things out and deciding what to do."

In practical application, the confrontive response often takes the form of a compound statement that sets up a "you say _____, but you do _____" format. The second part of the statement points out the discrepancy or contradiction in the client's behavior or message. For example, "You say you don't want to see him again, but you go to places where you know he'll be." In using confrontation, then, the counselor listens to the client's feeling and content messages, observes the client's behavior, and presents evidence of a contradiction or discrepancy to the client.

Risks Involved in Confrontation

Because confrontation is an extremely powerful tool for the counselor to use, there are certain risks involved. Whenever the counselor becomes aware of a discrepancy or contradiction in the client's behavior or messages, the benefits of using confrontation must be weighed against the risks.

Risks to the Client--If trust and empathy have not been firmly established in the counseling relationship, the premature use of a confrontive response could harm the relationship. The client could become distrustful of the counselor or decide that the counselor cannot be of any help to him/her. The use of confrontation can be very threatening and anxiety-producing for the client, and if the proper conditions aren't there to begin with, it can damage or end the counseling relationship.

The use of confrontation may precipitate a crisis in the client's life. Especially if a client seems emotionally unstable about certain areas of his/her life, it might not be wise to confront him/her on those particular areas. For example, if a client has just been fired from his job and is very upset about it, the counselor should probably not confront him at that moment with his job performance.

Risks to the Counselor--Sometimes the counselor does not confront the client because the counselor is protecting himself/herself from risk. The counselor may be hesitant to point out a discrepancy for fear he/she might be wrong and would not be able to substantiate the contradiction to the client. Or the counselor might not like to deal with the extreme emotional reactions that could follow a confrontation. The counselor may not be comfortable with anger, anxiety, or tears. The counselor may pass over an appropriate confrontation situation because he/she would be uncomfortable if the usual defenses were dropped and thus wants to prevent the relationship from getting too close or intense.

In deciding whether to confront or not, the counselor must weigh the possible benefits to the client against the possible harm. In addition, if the counselor is hesitating to confront, he/she should ask himself/herself whether this reluctance is out of concern for the client or out of self-concern. If the counselor recognizes that the reluctance to confront is out of concern for himself/herself, the counselor should search himself/herself to see whether the cause of the apprehension is a legitimate concern, such as fear of physical harm from an intoxicated client, or whether it is a fear the counselor should try to resolve within himself/herself.

The Outcomes of Confrontation

If the counselor's confrontation has been effective, it could lead to exploration of previously blocked or denied feelings or behavior. In addition, an effective confrontation can often bring about a kind of breakthrough in the client's recognition that a behavior change is needed.

In practice, the counselor often may not know whether the confrontation has been effective or helpful until after several more exchanges in the session or until a later session. The client's immediate response to the confrontation sometimes does not indicate its effectiveness.

Frequently, the beginning counselor does not know what to do after he/she attempts a confrontive response. The following general guides might help:

1. If the client accepts the confrontation and agrees with the discrepancy pointed out, the counselor can use the opportunity to reinforce positive behavior. The counselor might say, "It's really a step in the right direction that you can recognize and accept this contradictory behavior so easily."

2. If the client denies the confrontation, the counselor is probably wisest to return to an empathic response, such as, "My even suggesting that seems to bother you a lot." The client may not be ready to deal with the discrepancy at that time and it would not be helpful to persist in the confrontation.

3. The client may simply act confused or ambivalent after a confrontive statement. In that case, the counselor could focus on the current feeling by saying, "You seem to feel confused by my saying that."

Examples of Confrontation

Two examples of client statements and possible confrontive responses follow. After reading the examples (a) indicate next to each response whether it is appropriate or poor confrontation and why, and (b) formulate another appropriate response for at least one example. In addition, indicate the type of discrepancy each example illustrates.

Client (sitting with hands clenched, face muscles tight): I'm not really angry at my father for being a drunk. I mean he's been embarrassing me in front of my friends all of my life and I've gotten use to it.

Counselor: You say you're not angry, but right here as you talk about it I see you tensing up and looking upset. _____

Counselor: You say you've gotten used to being embarrassed in front of your friends, but I don't think you really mean that. _____

Counselor: You still seem angry about this to me and I think what you should do is go tell your father how you feel. _____

Counselor: _____

_____

Discrepancy is between _____

and _____

****

Client (who has admitted past inability to abstain when "out with the boys"): I know I'm getting better. Yes sir, I'm going to be out there with the boys and it's not going to bother me at all when they're stopping for a beer.

Counselor: It's good to hear that you don't think that situation will bother you, but how does that statement fit in with the fact that you told me that you broke down and drank with them when they stopped last week. _____

Counselor: You're not getting better at all; your past behavior shows you're a drunk and I guess you always will be. _____

Counselor: You say that won't bother you, but from other things you've said I'm not sure you're convinced of that youself. _____

Counselor: _____

_____

Discrepancy is between_____

and_____.

****

Summary of Confrontation

In confrontation, the counselor uses a question or statement to induce the client to face what the counselor thinks the client is avoiding. The counselor may, for example, point out discrepancies between the client's verbal and nonverbal behaviors, between two of the client's statements, or between the client's past behavior and his/her position or behavior in the counseling session. Used effectively, confrontation should help the client become more congruent and accept responsibility for his behavior. It can also reinforce the climate of trust, empathy, and genuineness in the counseling relationship. Because it is one of the most potent techniques the counselor can use, there are also some risks involved in using it. In deciding whether to use it or not, the counselor must determine whether the benefits of confrontation outweigh the possible harm to the client.

Confrontation Feedback Form

Instructions: *This form is to aid you in observing both videotaped and practice skill demonstrations and in providing feedback in the practice exercise. As observer, your job is to pay attention to the counselor's use of this skill. During the interaction, give your full attention to what the counselor and client say and do. At the end of the demonstration or practice period, quickly check the behaviors you observed. After the practice period(s), report to the counselor the behaviors you have checked.*

Guidelines for effective confrontation are:

- to confront only after the conditions of trust and empathy are firmly established in the counseling relationship,
- to confront only specific, concrete behaviors which the client can change,
- to direct confrontation toward both strengths and weaknesses, and
- to use a compound sentence with a "you say...but do..." format.

In addition, general types of discrepancies or contradictions which might be confronted include:

- between how client sees himself/herself and how he/she behaves,
- between how client says he/she feels and how behavior suggests he/she is feeling,
- between two verbal messages of client,
- between what client says he/she is feeling and the way most people would feel in similar situations, and
- between what client currently says he/she believes and how he/she has acted in the past.

Behavior	Video 1	Video 2	Practice
1. Confronted the client with a discrepancy present in the client's communication and/or behavior.	_____	_____	_____
2. Used confrontation to focus on both strengths and weaknesses.	_____	_____	_____
3. Included in the confrontive response an evaluation or accusation.	_____	_____	_____
4. Discouraged the client from making and accepting excuses for behavior.	_____	_____	_____
5. Confronted the client early in the counseling relationship before client seemed to trust counselor.	_____	_____	_____
6. Provided specific feedback on aspects of the client's situation that he/she could change.	_____	_____	_____
7. Used responses with "you say...but you do..." format.	_____	_____	_____

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brammer, L. The Helping Relationship. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1973.

Brief, soft-cover text focusing on how helpers can assist others to function more effectively in interpersonal relationships through improved basic communication skills. Content includes such areas as the characteristics of helpers, stages of the helping process, and descriptions of specific helping skills (listening, leading, reflecting, summarizing, confronting, interpreting, and informing).

Crawford, J., Stancavage, F. and Jimenez, C. Individual Counseling for Alcoholism Counselors, Participant's Manual. Rockville, Maryland: National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse, 1975.

One module of an experimental package entitled "Competency Training for Non-degreed Professionals in Alcoholism" that has been prepared for NIAAA by the American Institutes for Research in San Jose, California. The Individual Counseling module covers such topics as identifying and responding to feelings, and focusing on the communication and overcoming counselor roadblocks.

Gazda, G. Human Relations Development: A Manual for Educators. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1973.

Short soft-cover manual which offers a rationale for and a system of training in human relations (i.e., listening, communicating, and problem-solving) based on conditions essential to counseling such as empathy, respect, warmth, concreteness, genuineness, self-disclosure, confrontation, and immediacy.

Hackney, H. and Nye, S. Counseling Strategies and Objectives. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1973.

A brief, soft-cover text which uses the "programmed" learning approach to present a counseling model emphasizing relationship, communication, and discrimination processes. The model includes facets such as beginning and terminating an interview, establishing goals in counseling, responding to cognitive and affective content, and selecting appropriate counseling strategy.

Ivey, A., and Gluckstern, N. Basic Attending Skills, Participant Manual. Amherst, Massachusetts: Microtraining Associates, 1974.

A manual designed to accompany a video-based training program in attending skills which includes lecturettes on the skills. Using a microcounseling format, the communication skills featured are attending behavior, open invitation to talk, the paraphrase, responding to feelings and emotion, and summarization.

Ivey, A., and Gluckstern, N. Basic Attending Skills, Leader Manual. Amherst, Massachusetts: Microtraining Associates, 1974.

A manual designed to accompany a video-based training program in attending skills which emphasizes procedural activities. Using a microcounseling format, the communication skills featured are attending behavior, open invitation to talk, the paraphrase, responding to feelings and emotion, and summarization.

Ivey, A., and Gluckstern, N. Basic Influencing Skills, Participant Manual. Amherst, Massachusetts: Microtraining Associates, 1976.

A manual designed to accompany a microcounseling training program which follows the Basic Attending Skills program. Presuming that trainees have mastered the more basic listening skills, this program features such influencing skills as self-disclosure, interpretation, self-expressive behavior, focusing, and giving directions and includes lecturettes on the skills.

Ivey, A. and Gluckstern, N. Basic Influencing Skills, Leader Manual. Amherst, Massachusetts: Microtraining Associates, 1976.

A manual designed to accompany a microcounseling training program which follows the Basic Attending Skills program. Presuming that trainees have mastered the more basic listening skills, this program features such influencing skills as self-disclosure, interpretation, self-expressive behavior, focusing and giving directions, but emphasizes procedural activities as opposed to content.

Okun, B. Effective Helping: Interviewing & Counseling Techniques. N. Scituate, Massachusetts: Duxbury Press, 1976.

This paperback book, which integrates theory, practice, and application of communication skills, is designed to serve as an introduction to interviewing and counseling skills. The human relations counseling model presented is concerned with communication skills, the stages of the helping process, strategies for helping, and issues involved in helping.

Shertzer, B., and Stone, S. Fundamentals of Counseling. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1968.

A classic hard-cover text used in the counseling field. It covers a wide range of areas including counselor and client characteristics, various theoretical counseling approaches, core elements which facilitate counseling, and counseling techniques and practices.

Small, J. Becoming Naturally Therapeutic: A Handbook on the Art of Counseling, with Special Application to Alcoholism Counselors. Austin, Texas: Texas Commission on Alcoholism, 1974.

Very brief paperback handbook which explores the relationship of certain counseling techniques (confrontation, self-disclosure) and facilitating conditions (empathy, genuineness, respect, immediacy, concreteness, potency, and self-actualization) to the counseling of alcoholic clients. Available from the Texas Commission on Alcoholism, 809 Sam Houston Building, Austin, Texas 78701.

SUGGESTED READING

Helping Relationships

Avila, C., Combs, A. and Purkey, W. (editors) Helping Relationship Sourcebook. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1974.

Hard cover book edited to present a comprehensive array of material related to helping relationships contributed by experts in the field (Rogers, Snygg, Combs, Carkhuff, Truax, Maslow, etc.). Such areas as the Professional Helper, The Psychological Bases for Helping, The Helping Process, and The Person in the Process are explored from a phenomenological framework.

Brammer, L. and Shostrom, E. Therapeutic Psychology: Fundamentals of Actualization Counseling and Psychotherapy. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1968.

Hard cover classic text on counseling techniques used widely in the counseling field. Includes chapters on relationship techniques (rapport, reflection of feeling, acceptance, structuring, silence, leading, etc.) and interpretation techniques.

Carkhuff, R. Helping and Human Relations, A Primer for Lay and Professional Helpers, Selection & Training, Vol. I. New York: Rinehart & Winston, 1969.

Part of a two volume set. This first volume discusses the effectiveness of professional and paraprofessional helpers. Also presents a model of the helping process including the helper's function, the helper's impact, and environmental influences. Selection and training of helpers is discussed within the framework of the author's scales of facilitative dimensions.

Carkhuff, R. The Art of Helping. Amherst, Massachusetts: Human Resource Development Press, 1973.

Brief paperback outlining Carkhuff's basic methods in human relations training includes the areas of attending, responding, initiating, and communicating.

Suggested Reading (continued)

Carkhuff, R. The Art of Problem Solving. Amherst, Massachusetts: Human Resource Development Press, 1973.

Brief paperback designed as a follow-up to The Art of Helping. Covers developing the problem, breaking down the problem, and developing courses of action.

Jourard, S. The Transparent Self. New York: Van Nostrand, 1964

Short paperback which describes a theory of counseling based on disclosing oneself to another. Closely related to the skill of self-disclosure, this theory holds that a person can only learn about oneself by telling another person who he/she is.

Kagan, N. Influencing Human Interaction. Mason, Michigan: Mason Media, 1972

A training manual designed to accompany a video-based program for training counselors. The program covers four skill areas: exploratory responses, listening responses, affective responses, and honest labeling responses.

Rogers, C. On Becoming a Person. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1964.

One of the first books to explore the facilitative characteristics of the helping relationship. Became the basis on which many human relations training programs were subsequently developed.

Truax, C., & Carkhuff, R. Toward Effective Counseling & Psychotherapy: Training and Practice. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1967.

Hard cover text which examines a research and theoretical basis for training in psychotherapy and counseling. Explaining basically a phenomenological approach, the book provides an overview of the experiential model of training originated by Carkhuff.

Communication Skills

Danzinger, K. Interpersonal Communication. New York: Pergamon Press, 1976.

A recent hard cover publication which discusses interpersonal communication from several perspectives including nonverbal communication, psychotherapy as interpersonal communication, cultural differences in interpersonal communication, and disturbed communication in families.

Suggested Reading (continued)

Ivey, A. Microcounseling: Innovations in Interviewing Training. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1971.

Detailed description of the microcounseling approach to interviewing. Provides material on the research behind the single skills method and background information for those interested in teaching the helping skills.

Ivey, A.; Normington, D.; Miller, C.; Morrell, W.; and Haase, R. "Microcounseling and Attending Behavior: An Approach to Pre-Practicum Counselor Training," Journal of Counseling Psychology, 15, Monograph #5, pp. 1-12.

Journal article presenting research which studies the effects of microcounseling training of three skills (attending, reflection of feeling, summarizing) on three groups of beginning counselors. The results suggest that the three skills can be described in behavioral terms meaningful to beginning counselors.

Scheflen, A. Body Language & the Social Order. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1972.

Hard cover book focusing on nonverbal communication. Uses excellent pictures and illustrations to show the effects common gestures may have on others. Includes a section on how listeners convey whether they are paying attention and how speakers communicate nonverbally whether they believe what they're saying.

Tubbs, S., and Moss, S. Human Communication: An Interpersonal Perspective. New York: Random House, 1974.

Hard cover text outlining a model of interpersonal communication based on social learning theory. Aimed at the reader with more than basic knowledge of psychology and counseling, it offers an in-depth, sophisticated discussion of interpersonal communication including a section on the nonverbal message (cultural cues, visual cues, and vocal cues).

Alcoholism Counseling

Blane, H. The Personality of the Alcoholic. New York: Harper & Row, 1968.

Classic work discussing personality traits of the alcoholic. The author holds to the position that there is no particular personality pattern descriptive of all alcoholics and only alcoholics, but he does describe characteristics and behavior common enough in alcoholics to warrant some degree of generality about them.

Suggested Reading (continued)

Blum, E., and Blum, R. Alcoholism: Modern Psychological Approaches to Treatment. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1972.

Hard cover text which has become highly regarded by professionals in the alcoholism field. Discussion and evaluation of various treatment modalities is presented. Among those included: several psychodynamic therapies, group therapies, live-in facilities, and drug therapy.

Bourne, P., and Fox, R. Alcoholism, Progress in Research & Treatment. New York: Academic Press, 1973.

Comprehensive coverage of wide array of alcohol-related research and theoretical positions. Of special interest to counselors in the alcoholism field are Chapter 11, Does Alcoholics Anonymous Really Work? Chapter 12, The Treatment of the Alcoholic by the Nonphysician; and Chapter 13, The Alcoholic and His Family.